



**Testimony in opposition to Sec.19 of SB 830, An Act Concerning the Governor's  
Recommendations Regarding Education.**

**Education Committee: March 9, 2009**

Good afternoon Senator Gaffey, Representative Fleishmann and members of the Education Committee. My name is Lucy Nolan and I am the executive director of End Hunger Connecticut!, a statewide anti-hunger and food security education, advocacy and outreach organization. I am here today to speak in opposition to the reduced funding for the Healthy School meals certification program as proposed by the Governor.

Now is certainly not the time to cut funding to schools for meals. More and more families are counting on school meals to help them through tough economic times. The school food services are seeing increased participation, and lack of ability to pay for, school meals. With the passage of the Health Foods and Beverages in Schools Act two years ago Connecticut made a public policy commitment to feed our children as healthy meals as possible, and to make schools a safe learning environment.

In the three years since passage of the legislation over 63% of the state's school districts are participating in the program – I have added the list to my testimony – that's 115 out of 183 school districts. Connecticut has been a leader with this legislation and many food companies are working within the confines of the State Department of Education's certification program and creating foods with less sugar, calories, and proper serving sizes.

A study done by the Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity at Yale shows that schools that are part of the Healthy Food Certification program has better scores in teaching students about nutrition, serving healthier foods in all parts of the schools and, most importantly, is being translated to healthier nutritional choices in the student's homes.

As you will hear, or have heard, today about the difficulties that Food Service Directors are having with the increased cost of food in general, and for the increased costs that they shoulder with all the additional costs they bear the burden for just to run their cafeterias. Do we want our school systems to go back to selling junk to our children in order to make more money? Many of Food Service Directors are committed to serving as healthy and tasty meals as possible but they need support to do so. While the Governor has said she is not going to decrease spending on education, this cut is a cut that will have to be made up through our town's Board of Education, through the pocketbooks of parents, or through the health of our children. This will particularly tough in the communities in which many children get most of their meals at school. Please let's not make our children's health something to be bargained away.

The Healthy Food Certification is a program that works – both at school and at home. Please ensure that it is adequately funded so our children are able to learn better and be healthier. Thank you.

# Connecticut School Districts Implementing Healthy Food Certification

## 2008-09 School Year

During the 2008-09 school year, the following 115 school districts and schools elected to implement healthy food certification (HFC) under section 10-215f of the Connecticut General Statutes. This represents 62.8 percent of the 183 school districts and schools eligible for HFC in 2008-09\*. Schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program through an interschool agreement with another school district have the option of implementing HFC if the other school district has certified. If a school district is not listed, either it has chosen not to implement HFC or is ineligible for HFC.

- Andover Elementary School\*\* (Coventry Public Schools)
- Ansonia Public Schools
- Ashford Public Schools
- Bethany Public Schools
- Bethel Public Schools
- Bloomfield Public Schools
- Branford Public Schools
- Bridgeport Public Schools
- Bristol Public Schools
- Brookfield Public Schools
- Brooklyn Public Schools
- Canterbury Public Schools
- Canton Public Schools
- Chaplin Elementary School
- Cheshire Public Schools
- Clinton Public Schools
- Colchester Public Schools
- Colebrook Public Schools
- Coventry Public Schools
- Danbury Public Schools
- Derby Public Schools
- East Hartford Public Schools
- East Haven Public Schools
- Farmington Public Schools
- Franklin Public Schools
- Glastonbury Public Schools
- Groton Public Schools
- Guilford Public Schools
- Hampton Public Schools
- Hartford Public Schools
- Hebron Public Schools
- Lebanon Public Schools
- Ledyard Public Schools
- Lisbon Public Schools
- Litchfield Public Schools\*\* (Education Connection)
- Manchester Public Schools
- Mansfield Public Schools
- Marlborough Public Schools
- Meriden Public Schools
- Middletown Public Schools
- Monroe Public Schools
- Montville Public Schools
- New Britain Public Schools
- New Fairfield Public Schools
- New Hartford Public Schools
- New Haven Public Schools
- New London Public Schools
- New Milford Public Schools
- Newington Public Schools
- North Canaan Public Schools
- North Haven Public Schools
- North Stonington Public Schools
- Norwalk Public Schools
- Norwich Public Schools
- Orange Public Schools
- Oxford Public Schools
- Plainville Public Schools
- Plymouth Public Schools
- Pomfret Public Schools
- Portland Public Schools
- Preston Public Schools
- Putnam Public Schools
- Rocky Hill Public Schools
- Salem Public Schools
- Scotland Public Schools
- Simsbury Public Schools
- South Windsor Public Schools
- Southington Public Schools
- Sprague Public Schools
- Stafford Public Schools
- Sterling Public Schools
- Stonington Public Schools
- Thomaston Public Schools
- Thompson Public Schools
- Tolland Public Schools
- Vernon Public Schools
- Voluntown Public Schools
- Waterbury Public Schools
- Waterford Public Schools
- Watertown Public Schools
- Westbrook Public Schools
- West Hartford Public Schools
- Wethersfield Public Schools
- Willington Public Schools
- Winchester Public Schools
- Windham Public Schools
- Windsor Public Schools
- Windsor Locks Public Schools
- Wolcott Public Schools
- Woodbridge Public Schools
- Woodstock Public Schools
- Regional School District #5: Bethany, Orange, Woodbridge
- Regional School District #9: Easton, Redding
- Regional School District #16: Beacon Falls, Prospect
- Regional School District #18: Lyme, Old Lyme
- Achievement First, Bridgeport
- Amistad Academy, New Haven
- Area Cooperative Education Services (ACES)
- Capitol Regional Education Center (CREC)
- Common Ground Charter High School, New Haven
- EASTCONN PACE\*\* (Windham Public Schools)
- East Hartford-Glastonbury Elementary Magnet, East Hartford\*\* (East Hartford Public Schools)
- Elm City College Preparatory, New Haven
- Highville Mustard Seed Charter School, Hamden\*\* (ACES)
- Jumoake Academy Charter, Hartford\*\* (Hartford Public Schools)
- Metropolitan Learning Center, Bloomfield\*\* (Windsor Public Schools)
- Montessori Magnet, Hartford
- New Beginnings Family Academy Charter School, Bridgeport
- Side By Side Community Charter School, Norwalk\*\* (Norwalk Public Schools)
- Six to Six Magnet, Bridgeport\*\* (Bridgeport Public Schools)
- The Bridge Academy Charter School, Bridgeport
- The Friendship Magnet School, Waterford\*\* (Waterford Public Schools)
- Thomas Edison Middle Magnet, Meriden\*\* (Meriden Public Schools)
- Two Rivers Magnet, East Hartford\*\* (East Hartford Public Schools)
- University of Hartford Multiple Intelligences Magnet School, Hartford\*\* (CREC)

\* HFC eligibility includes all public school districts participating in the National School Lunch Program, including regional educational service centers, the Connecticut Technical High School System, charter schools, interdistrict magnet schools and endowed academies.

\*\* Designates a school that participates in HFC through an interschool agreement with the district indicated in parenthesis.

# Connecticut School Districts Implementing Healthy Food Certification

## 2008-09 School Year, Continued

### Changes in Participating Districts

Seventeen new districts signed up to implement healthy food certification for the 2008-09 school year, including:

- Chaplin Elementary School
- Danbury Public Schools
- Ledyard Public Schools
- Litchfield Public Schools\*\* (Education Connection)
- Manchester Public Schools
- Monroe Public Schools
- Newington Public Schools
- Oxford Public Schools
- Rocky Hill Public Schools
- Sterling Public Schools
- Southington Public Schools
- Thomaston Public Schools
- Windham Public Schools
- Woodstock Public Schools
- Achievement First, Bridgeport
- EASTCONN PACE\*\* (Windham Public Schools)
- Montessori Magnet, Hartford

Ninety-eight percent of the 100 school districts that implemented healthy food certification in 2007-08 recertified for the 2008-09 school year. Only two districts did not recertify: Trumbull Public Schools and West Haven Public Schools.

\*\* Designates a school that participates in HFC through an interschool agreement with the district indicated in parenthesis.

### Changes in Statewide HFC Eligibility and Participation

As indicated in Figure 1, from 2007-08 to 2008-09, the overall number of school districts eligible for HFC increased by 4 districts (2.2 percent) and the overall number of districts choosing to participate in HFC increased by 15 districts (15.0 percent). During the 2007-08 school year, 55.9 percent of eligible school districts participated in HFC. This figure increased to 62.8 percent for the 2008-09 school year, a change of 12.3 percent (see Figure 2). HFC participation has increased by 24.1 percent overall from the first year (2006-07) to 2008-09 (see Figures 3 and 4).

Figure 1. Change in Eligible versus Participating Districts from 2007-08 to 2008-09

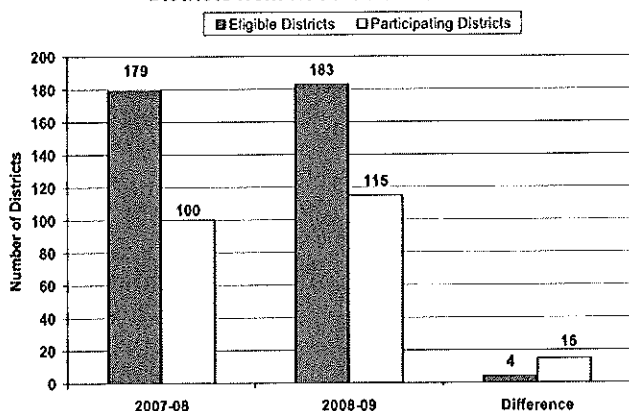


Figure 2. Change in Healthy Food Certification Participation from 2007-08 to 2008-09

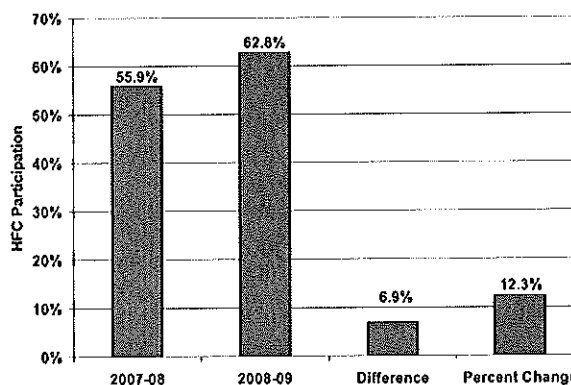


Figure 3. Healthy Food Certification Participation To Date

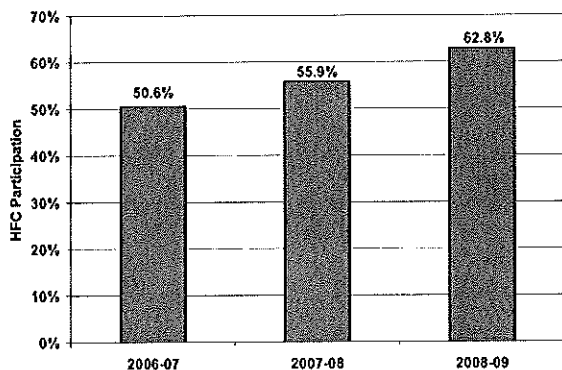
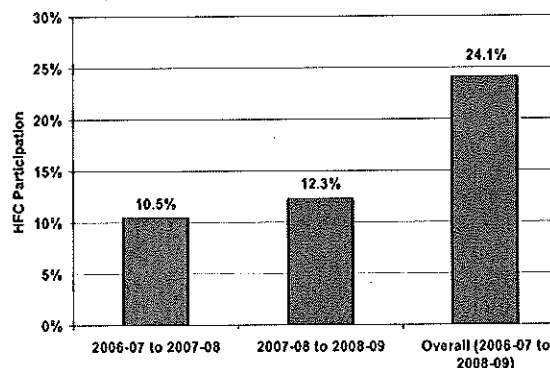


Figure 4. Percent Increase in Healthy Food Certification To Date



Information regarding Connecticut's healthy food certification and state statutes for school food and beverages can be found at <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=320754>. For additional information on HFC, contact Susan S. Fiore, M.S., R.D., Nutrition Education Coordinator, Connecticut State Department of Education, Bureau of Health and Nutrition Services and Child/Family/School Partnerships, 25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown, CT 06457 • Phone: (860) 807-2075 • E-mail: [susan.fiore@ct.gov](mailto:susan.fiore@ct.gov)

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